

Israel Promotes Heritage Landmarks Project

On February 11 the Israel Postal Administration released a National Heritage Landmarks Sheetlet of 10. The set depicts sites that attest to the cultural and historical heritage of the Jewish people in their homeland going back to Biblical times, referred to as Eretz Israel.

In 2010 the Israeli government initiated “the Empowerment of National Heritage Infrastructure Project, whose goal is the “preservation, restoration, development, study, publicity, advertising and marketing of historical assets and cultural

treasures in order to strengthen Israel’s identity, cultural wealth and unifying strength.” The Heritage Project includes hundreds of cultural assets, five of which are featured on the stamps in this series:

City of David, Jerusalem: The City of David, the first capital of the united Jewish nation, was captured from the Jebusites by King David 3,000 years ago. Located just below Mount Moriah, the City of David was the center of Ancient Jerusalem and served as the setting in which many of the events described in the Bible occurred.

The stamp bears the seal of Gemaryahu ben Shaphan against the background of an aerial photo of the City of David. The stamp tab features the Shiloach Inscription which describes the digging of Hezekiah’s Tunnel inside of which the inscription was discovered.

Ein Keshatot, Golan: In the late 19th century, the remains of a Jewish village dating back to the 5th century, which was destroyed in the 8th century by an earthquake, were discovered. As part of the Heritage Project, the village synagogue is being restored and the overall site is being developed.

The stamp features the restored synagogue and the dais for the Holy Ark. The tab depicts the menorah engraved on the capital of one of the columns in the synagogue.

Synagogue, Peki’in: In the early 20th century, Zionist leader Yitzhak Ben-Zvi came to the Galilean village of Peki’in, where he met members of the Musta’arabi community, Jews who according to tradition never left ancient, Eretz, Israel and continued to work the land. The synagogue located at the center of the village was renovated in the 19th century and



two ancient stone tablets were incorporated into its walls. A menorah is engraved on one of the tablets, and a Holy Ark on the other. The Heritage Project is focused on documenting the history of the Peki’in community and on preserving the ancient synagogue.

The stamp features the Peki’in synagogue as well as the engraved menorah. The stamp tab depicts a relief of the Holy Ark.

Detention Camp, Atlit: The restrictions imposed by British Mandate authorities on

the entry of Jews into Eretz Israel forced Yishuv leaders and various immigration movements to act illegally and bring the Jewish immigrants in on dilapidated ships and under harsh conditions. The British tried to capture the immigrant ships and transfer their passengers to detention camps which were constructed first in Atlit. The Society for Preservation of Israel Heritage Sites, which maintains the camp, purchased and renovated a ship similar to those that served to bring the Jewish immigrants and built an exhibit inside. The site is being developed within the framework of the Heritage Project.

The stamp features a ship similar to those used to bring immigrants against the background of barracks at the Atlit detention camp. The stamp tab shows passengers disembarking from an immigrant ship.

Independence Hall, Tel-Aviv: The State of Israel was established on May 14, 1948. The declaration ceremony was conducted in one of the first homes built in Tel-Aviv. The building was later turned into an art museum. David Ben Gurion read the Declaration of Independence, which was signed at the bottom by members of the Provisional State Council. As part of the Heritage Project, the declaration hall was renovated and an Independence Museum is to be established there.

The stamp features the Declaration of Independence against the background of Independence Hall. The stamp tab shows David Ben Gurion reading the Declaration of Independence as he announces the establishment of the State of Israel.

Additional information on this and other Israel issues can be accessed at www.igpc.com.